WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   An apparatus for evaluating the license rights of a request to use a content item, the system comprising:

a database comprising a plurality of licenses that govern the permitted uses of the content item; and

a content rights broker module that receives the request and evaluates the request against the database to determine whether the use is authorized.

2.   The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the rights broker module evaluates the request against the licenses.

3.   The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein the licenses are grouped in accordance with different uses of the content item

4.   The apparatus of Claim 3, wherein the licenses within each grouping of licenses is arranged according to a predetermined order.

5.   The apparatus of Claim 4, wherein the predetermined order comprises a hierarchical ordering.

6.   The apparatus of Claim 4, wherein the predetermined order comprises an ordering according to the breadth of grants associated with the licenses.

7.   The apparatus of Claim 4, wherein the predetermined order comprises an ordering based on the restrictiveness of rules associated with the licenses.

8.   The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein each license is associated with one or more entitlement rules.

9.   The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein each license is associated with one or more granted rights.

10.   The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the content rights broker is configured to evaluate the request by evaluating one or more Boolean expressions.

11.   The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein the entitlement rules include one or more Boolean expressions.

12.   The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein the Boolean expressions comprise at least one attribute associated with the consumer.

13.   The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein the Boolean expressions comprise at least one attribute associated with the content item.

14.   The apparatus of Claim 13, wherein the attribute is associated with a rating classification.

15.   The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein the Boolean expressions comprise at least one attribute associated with general information.

16.   The apparatus of Claim 15, wherein the general information comprises a date or a date range.

17.   A system for evaluating the license rights of a request to use a content item, the system comprising:

a configuration interface that allows creation of at least one license template, the license template comprising entitlement requirements and grants; and

a content rights broker that evaluates whether the license template authorizes the requested use, the content rights broker configured to perform the evaluation based at least in part on the entitlement requirements and one or more items of information associated with a user.

18.   The system of Claim 17, wherein the license template is associated with one or more failures messages that are communicated to the use if the license template does not authorize the requested use.

19.   The system of Claim 17, wherein the entitlement requirements comprise one or more Boolean expressions, the Boolean expressions comprising one or more predicates associated with attributes of the user.

20.   The system of Claim 19, wherein the content rights broker is further configured to perform the evaluation by evaluating one or more of the Boolean expressions.

21.   A method of evaluating the license rights of a request to use a content item, the method comprising:

providing a license configuration interface comprising a license template;

receiving entitlement requirements and grants via the license template;

creating at least one license by associating at least one entitlement requirement with at least one grant;

receiving an identifier of the requested use;

receiving attributes associated with a user; and

evaluating the user attributes and requested use identifier against at least one license to determine whether any of the licenses authorize the requested use.

22.   The method of Claim 21, further comprising receiving a set of failure messages and associating at least one error message at least one license.

23.   The method of Claim 22, further comprising creating at least one license chain by associating one or more licenses.

24.   The method of Claim 23, wherein the error messages are communicated to the consumer if none of the licenses of a license chain authorize the requested use.

25.   The method of Claim 23, further comprising creating a license matrix by associating one or more license chains.

26.   The method of Claim 21, wherein the requested use comprises playback.

27.   The method of Claim 21, wherein the requested use comprises copying to a compact disc or digital video disc.

28.   The method of Claim 21, wherein the requested use comprises downloading to a portable player.

29.   The method of Claim 21, wherein the attributes are selected from the group consisting of: geographical residence, geographical location, and age.

30.   The method of Claim 21, wherein evaluating comprises evaluating at least one entitlement requirement.

31.   The method of Claim 21, wherein evaluating comprises evaluating at least one Boolean-based expression.

32.   A method of creating a license matrix for use in evaluating a content item use request, the method comprising:

providing a license configuration interface;

receiving a set of rules representing at least one entitlement requirement;

receiving a set of grants defining the allowed uses of content;

configuring a content license by associating at least one rules with one or more grants;

configuring a license chain by associating one or more content licenses; and

configuring a license matrix by associating one or more license chains.

33. The method of Claim 32, wherein receiving a set of rules comprises receiving one or more predicates of a Boolean expression.

34. The method of Claim 33, wherein receiving predicates comprises receiving predicates having arguments that correspond to at least one attribute of a consumer.

35. The method of Claim 32, wherein configuring a license chain comprises associating one or more licenses for governing a specific use of the content item.

36. A license matrix for evaluating a request to use a content item, the license matrix comprising at least one license chain, each license chain comprising at least one content license, and each content license comprising at least one entitlement requirement and/or at least one grant.

37. The license matrix of Claim 36, wherein each of the license chains corresponds to an indicator for a different use of the content item.

38. The license matrix of Claim 36, wherein the entitlement requirements comprise Boolean-based rules.

39. The license matrix of Claim 38, wherein the Boolean-based rules comprise arguments that correspond to attributes of consumers.

40. The license matrix of Claim 36, further comprising one or more failure messages associated with one or more the content licenses.

41. A system for licensed use of content items, the system comprising a player interface module that receives a request for use of a content item, the player interface module configured to communicate via a network with a content rights broker module, the player interface module configured to receive a license for the use of the content item, and the license being associated with a license matrix that the content rights broker module uses to evaluate the request.

42. The system of Claim 41, wherein the player interface comprises a module that resides in a computing device accessible by an end-user.

43. The system of Claim 41, wherein the license received by the player interface comprises a decryption key and one or more grants.

44. The system of Claim 41, wherein the license matrix comprises one or more groups of licenses, each group associated with a different use of the content item.

45. The system of Claim 44, wherein the licenses within each group are configured to have an ordered arrangement relative to one another.

46. The system of Claim 45, wherein the ordered arrangement comprises a sequential ordering corresponding to a hierarchy of grants.

47. A system for licensed use of content items, the system comprising a content rights broker configured to receive a use request and to evaluate the use request against a license matrix, the license matrix comprising a plurality of licenses grouped in license chains, each license chain comprising one or more licenses, and each license comprising one or more rules and one or more grants.

48. The system of Claim 47, wherein the rules comprise one or more Boolean expressions.

49. The system of Claim 48, wherein the Boolean expressions comprise arguments that correspond to attributes of consumers.

50. The system of Claim 47, wherein the rights broker is configured to evaluate the use request by evaluating Boolean expressions associated with licenses of the license matrix.

51. A computer readable medium comprising computer instructions that when executed by a computing device perform the following method:

    detecting a request for the use of a content item;

    forwarding said request to a content rights broker via a computer network;

    receiving from the content rights broker a license authorizing the requested use; and

    allowing performance of the requested use.

52. The computer readable medium of Claim 51, wherein receiving comprises receiving a decryption key and one or more grants.

53. The computer readable medium of Claim 51, wherein detecting comprises detecting a request to copy the content item to a compact video disc.

54. The computer readable medium of Claim 51, wherein detecting comprises detecting a request to download the content to a portable player.

55. The computer readable medium of Claim 51, wherein detecting comprises detecting a request to playback the content.

56. A computer readable medium comprising computer instructions that when executed by a computing device perform the following method:

receiving a request for the use of a content item;

evaluating the request against a license matrix to determine the license rights applicable to the requested use; and

sending to a consumer at least one indication of the license rights associated with the requested use.

57. The computer readable medium of Claim 56, wherein evaluating comprises evaluation one or more Boolean expressions.

58. The computer readable medium of Claim 56, wherein sending comprises sending a decryption key and one more grants.

59. A method of using content subject to a digital rights management system, the method comprising:

sending to a content rights broker a use request, the request comprising data associated with a consumer, data identifying a content item, and data associated with a use of the content item;

receiving from the content rights broker an indication of the license rights associated with the requested use; and

performing the requested use if the license rights authorize the requested use, the requested use previously evaluated by the content rights broker against a matrix license comprising the license rights.

60. The method of Claim 59, wherein the matrix license comprises a plurality of license chains.

61. The method of Claim 60, wherein each of the license chains comprises one or more license rights.

62.   A method of delivering secured content subject to digital rights management rules over a computer network, the method comprising:

encrypting a content item;

creating a license matrix comprising one or more licenses that govern the allowed uses of the content item;

requesting a use of the content item;

evaluating whether the requested use is governed by a license of the license matrix; and

forwarding a license allowing the requested use if at least one license of the license matrix authorizes the requested use.

63.   The method of Claim 62, wherein creating a license matrix comprises configuring a plurality of licenses into groups.

64.   The method of Claim 63, wherein one or more the licenses appear in two or more groups.

65.   The method of Claim 63, wherein each group is associated with a different use of the content item.

66.   The method of Claim 62, wherein evaluating comprises evaluating one or more Boolean expressions.

67.   The method of Claim 62, wherein forwarding a license comprises forwarding an encryption key and one or more grants.

68.   A method for delivery of digital content, the method comprising

providing configurable rules based at least in part on user attributes;

defining a plurality of licenses for use of a content item;

receiving a request for authorization to use the content item;

verifying whether at least one of the plurality of licenses authorizes a use the of the content item; and

providing information on how to qualify for a license if none of the plurality of licenses authorizes the use.

69.   The method of Claim 68, wherein user attributes comprise age.

70.   The method of Claim 68, wherein user attributes comprise residence.

71.   The method of Claim 68, wherein user attributes comprise payment method.

72.   The method of Claim 68, wherein a license comprises at least one grant.

73.   The method of Claim 68, wherein the rules comprise Boolean-based expressions.

74.   The method of Claim 68, wherein verifying comprises comparing the licenses against the user attributes.

75.   The method of Claim 74, wherein verifying comprises evaluating at least one Boolean expression.

76.   The method of Claim 75, wherein the Boolean expression comprises at least one argument based on a user attribute.

77.   The method of Claim 68, wherein the use is playback.

78.   The method of Claim 68, wherein the use is copying to a compact disc.

79.   The method of Claim 68, wherein the use is copying to a digital video disc.

80.   The method of Claim 68, wherein the use is copying to a hard-drive.

81.   The method of Claim 68, wherein the use is downloading to a portable player.

82.   The method of Claim 68, wherein the rules are dynamically reconfigurable.

83.   The method of Claim 68, wherein the licenses are dynamically reconfigurable.